



## Knowledge For The People

### A Call to St. Francis Xavier's College, Antigonish, N.S.

As a consequence of the war mementous changes have taken place everywhere in national life and thought. Old ways of thinking and acting have been broken up and a new spirit has gone abroad. The existence of this new spirit today can no more be doubted than we were permitted to doubt, during the years between 1914 and 1919, that we were at war. Nowhere is this new spirit more in evidence than in the field of Education. No other idea has so gripped the people of the whole world as the desire for more Knowledge, better intellectual training, and better organized effort in their various callings. It has gripped then *en masse*, and without regard to condition, class or circumstances. Men and women everywhere are clamoring for the equal opportunity that education and intellectual training give. "A man's a man for a' that" has taken on a new significance. There have not been two types of V.C.'s nor two typed of wooden crosses in the Flanders fields. Whoever started the war, its terror and tragedy fell mainly on the people and now that peace has come they seek an equal share in opportunity and in the good and worth while things of life. Disabilities and unjust inequalities, scarcely realized in times past by the very victims, or if realized borne with dull resignation, have now come to the attention of all and they must be redressed.

Educational Extension is one of the terms used to describe numerous ventures designed to meet the growing demand among the multitude for knowledge and training. This demand does not come exclusively nor mainly from any one particular class. It is common to all classes. The idea did not altogether come as a new thing with the war. For twenty years, extension teaching has been growing in volume both in Europe and America. Subjects like Literature, History, Economics and Philosophy, that were once studied by the privileged few, are being sought by a rapidly increasing number of grown-up men and women, who in their teens were not in a position to pursue such studies. The war accentuated and accelerated the movement. So much so that, in the five years from 1914 to 1919 extension teaching for the people, in the United States, more than doubled its appropriations and increased its students more than three fold.

During the war, the idea that the whole nation spiritually, physically, and industrially was on the firing line was thoroughly driven home. The enforcing of this idea and the propaganda to win the war was a wholesale adoption of Educational Extension methods. All the instruments and devices that Extension teaching had utilized were brought to bear on mobilizing public opinion. The people had to be educated in the purposes, causes, and results of the various policies of the Allies and our enemies. War Industrial Boards, Food and Fuel administration, War-Loan and Red Cross Committees, Public Information and Propaganda Bureaus carried on, through such existing channels as they found and

through their own organizations, energetic campaigns of Extension teaching along historic, political, and economic lines. University and College graduates and the colleges themselves contributed direction and formed the vast proportion of the teaching personnel. It is not without interest to note that, as a rule, the men employed were the ablest and the most highly trained specialists that could be procured.

### University Extension

With this movement for universal education, transcending all existing schools and all ordinary avenues of training, has come inevitably a change in the theory and practice of our Colleges and Universities and the development of what is known by the name of *University Extension*. University Extension implies an organized effort to give to the people not in college some of the advantages enjoyed by the one-half of one per cent who are able to attend college. It reaches out to the farmer, the workman and the average citizen, and says to each: "If you cannot go to your college, your college will come to you." Agricultural Extension makes better farmers, and general Extension makes more effective and successful men and better citizens.

That there is at the present time a fertile field for Educational Extension, the following considerations prove:

1. We have many returned soldiers whose experience has impressed upon them in many ways the importance of Education. It is a matter of common knowledge that, as a class, they are eager for instruction. The vast majority of them must depend upon such opportunities as can be provided by Extension teaching. They cannot go to college and they will not attend the common or the high schools.
2. Increase in wages, better prices for the products of labor, and shorter hours have given men and women time and means for self-improvement far beyond what they have ever before enjoyed.
3. The coming of Prohibition removes temptation from large numbers who formerly spent time and money in various forms of dissipation - time which may now be devoted to self-improvement and intellectual pursuits.
4. The farmers' movement and the programs of the various branches of Labor show clearly that the people as a whole are seeking for better living and a more active and dignified part in the nation's life.
5. The granting of the Franchise to women places on them obligations which call for an understanding of many complex and difficult problems which they will help to solve by their votes if intelligently cast. Apart from their new political responsibilities, their participation in general activities during the war has made them especially eager for self-improvement.
6. There is always a considerable number of boys and girls from 16 to 25 years who, for one reason or another, have received very little intellectual training and who would take advantage of opportunities offered them for instruction, either by way of organized class-instruction or by correspondence.